

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. An apparatus, comprising:

an application server component that receives one or more notifications of one or
5 more open communication sessions from one or more first communication devices;

wherein the application server component sends one or more of the one or more
notifications of one or more of the one or more open communication sessions to one or
more second communication devices;

wherein upon a request by a communication device of the one or more second
10 communication devices to join an open communication session of the one or more of the
one or more open communication sessions, the application server component initiates a
connection of the communication device to the open communication session.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the one or more of the one or more
notifications comprise information of the one or more of the one or more open
15 communication sessions;

wherein the application server component sends the one or more of the one or
more notifications to the one or more second communication devices to output the
information to one or more users of the one or more second communication devices.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the information comprises one or more topics of the one or more of the one or more open communication sessions;

wherein the one or more users of the one or more second communication devices comprise a user of the communication device, wherein the user employs the communication device to make a selection of a topic from the one or more topics,
5 wherein the topic corresponds to the open communication session;

wherein the communication device sends the request that comprises the topic to the application server component to join the open communication session;

wherein upon receipt of the request, the application server component initiates the
10 connection of the communication device to the open communication session.

4. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the information comprises a list of the one or more first communication devices;

wherein the one or more users of the one or more second communication devices comprise a user of the communication device, wherein the user employs the list to make a
15 determination to join the open communication session;

wherein upon the determination, the communication device sends the request to the application server component;

wherein upon receipt of the request, the application server component initiates the connection of the communication device to the open communication session.

5. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the information comprises a limit to a number of the one or more second communication devices able to participate in the open communication session;

wherein once the number of the one or more second communication devices in
5 the open communication session reaches the limit, the application server component rejects subsequent requests of the one or more second communication devices to join the open communication session.

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the request comprises a session identification of the open communication session, wherein the application server
10 component sends the session identification to the one or more control components to initiate the connection of the communication device to the open communication session;

wherein the one or more control components employ the session identification to connect the communication device to the open communication session.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein a third communication device accesses
15 the application server component to obtain a list of the one or more open communication sessions;

wherein upon a request by the third communication device to join the open communication session, the application server component initiates a connection of the third communication device to the open communication session.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein prior to receipt of the request from the communication device by the application server component, the one or more first communication devices send a notification of a private communication session to one or more of the one or more second communication devices;

5 wherein the open communication session becomes the private communication session.

9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the application server component receives one or more requests to join the private communication session from the one or more of the one or more second communication devices.

10 10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the application server component sends one or more rejections of the one or more requests to the one or more of the one or more second communication devices.

11. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the application server component sends one or more acceptances of the one or more requests to the one or more of the one or
15 more second communication devices.

12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the one or more open communication sessions comprise one or more voice chat rooms, wherein the one or more notifications of the one or more open communication session comprise one or more notifications of one or more topics of the one or more voice chat rooms;
- 5 wherein the application server component sends one or more of the one or more notifications of one or more of the one or more voice chat rooms to the one or more second communication devices.

13. A method, comprising the steps of:

sending one or more notifications of one or more open communication sessions to one or more communication devices;

receiving a request to join an open communication session of the one or more open communication sessions from a communication device of the one or more communication devices; and

initiating a connection of the communication device to the open communication session.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the one or more notifications comprise

information of the one or more open communication sessions, wherein the information comprises one or more of a topic, a list of one or more users of the one or more communication devices, and a list of the one or more open communication sessions, wherein the one or more of the topic and the list correspond to the communication session, wherein the step of receiving the request to join the open communication session from the communication device comprises the steps of:

employing the one or more of the topic, the list of the one or more users, and the list of the one or more open communication sessions to make a determination to join the open communication session; and

receiving the request to join the open communication session from the communication device.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the one or more notifications comprise information of the one or more open communication sessions, wherein the information comprises a limit to a number of the one or more communication devices able to participate in the open communication session, wherein the step of receiving the request
5 to join the open communication session from the communication device comprises the steps of:

receiving the request to join the open communication session from the communication device upon reaching the limit of the number of the one or more communication devices; and

10 sending a rejection of the request to the communication device prior to initiation of the connection of the communication device to the open communication session.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein the request comprises a session identification of the open communication session, wherein the step of initiating the connection of the communication device to the open communication session comprises
15 the steps of:

receiving the session identification from the communication device; and

sending the session identification to one or more control components to connect the communication device to the open communication session.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of initiating the connection of the communication device to the open communication session comprises the steps of:

enabling access to a list of the one or more open communication sessions to a second communication device;

5 receiving a request to join the open communication session from the second communication device; and

initiating the connection of the second communication device to the open communication session.

18. The method of claim 13, wherein the one or more communication devices
10 comprise one or more first communication devices, the method further comprising the steps of:

receiving a notification of a private communication session prior to receipt of the request to join the open communication from one or more second communication devices;

15 sending the notification of the private communication session to one or more of the one or more first communication devices; and

changing the open communication session to the private communication session.

19. An article, comprising:

one or more computer-readable signal-bearing media;

means in the one or more media for sending one or more notifications of one or more open communication sessions to one or more communication devices;

5 means in the one or more media for receiving a request to join an open communication session of the one or more open communication sessions from a communication device of the one or more communication devices; and

means in the one or more media for initiating a connection of the communication device to the open communication session.

10 20. The article of claim 19, wherein the one or more notifications comprise information of the one or more open communication sessions, wherein the information comprises one or more of a topic, a list of one or more users of the one or more communication devices, and a list of the one or more open communication sessions, wherein the one or more of the topic and the list correspond to the communication
15 session, wherein the means in the one or more media for receiving the request to join the open communication session from the communication device comprises:

means in the one or more media for employing the one or more of the topic, the list of the one or more users, and the list of the one or more open communication sessions to make a determination to join the open communication session; and

20 means in the one or more media for receiving the request to join the open communication session from the communication device.

* * * * *